

Despite the fact that, as has been said, the appropriation to this Department was less than for the previous year, and the further fact that all this extra work was carried on, the Department turned back into the city treasury the sum of \$14,105.07.

This Department has also established its own repair shop, by the installation of which it is able to save a large sum annually on repairs.

The Department has effected a saving in the contract for removing ashes and refuse matter from the city of \$2,553.84, since August 8, 1912, when the present contract went into effect.

DEPARTMENT OF LAW.

Nineteen hundred and twelve was perhaps the busiest year for the Law Department in the history of the city, due partly to the important legislation, which was prepared by the City Solicitor, and the adoption of which was obtained from the Legislature of 1912, and more largely to the unusually large amount of work done by the Sewerage Commission, the Paving Commission, the Water Board, and other city departments,

Twenty-two Bills were prepared, of which seventeen were passed, and all became laws except the Bill to prohibit railroad tracks on the Fallsway, and a Bill for a \$300 furniture exemption, which were vetoed by the Governor.

The most important of these Bills was the new condemnation law, by which the city can acquire property for the new water supply, or for any other public purpose except street openings, by trial in court before a judge and jury, thus doing away with the old disgraceful proceedings before a sheriff's jury. This is a great reform in the law, and will mean a vast saving for the city—perhaps not less than a million dollars in the cost of the property for the new and enlarged water supply alone.

The other work of the Department included:

Examination and approval of 156 ordinances.

Examination and approval of 189 specifications for advertisements for contracts for city work.

Examination and approval of 559 bonds and contracts.

Collection of a large amount of delinquent taxes.

Three hundred and sixteen written opinions furnished the Mayor and the various city departments.

One hundred and fifty-six cases in the various courts, and in the Court of Appeals, tried or otherwise finally disposed of (included in these were two cases of the very greatest importance); one the suit by the Warren Manufacturing Company to try to compel the city to carry out the agreement made by the former Water Board to pay \$725,000 for the Warren property and for an injunction to prevent the city from building its dam, and the other the suit of Ridgely versus the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, attacking the validity of the new condemnation law. Both of these suits were tried and determined in the lower courts in favor of the city, and were argued in the Court of Appeals in 1912, and both were decided by the Court of Appeals in favor of the city about the middle of January, 1913.

Thirty-one street openings were concluded during the year, involving the examination of 1,260 titles.

One hundred and eighty-six properties were purchased by the city during the year, other than for street openings, of the value of \$1,034,068.31; titles examined and deeds drawn.

The City Solicitor also took part in the case before the Interstate Commerce Commission, for a differential in freight rates, which was decided in favor of Baltimore.

Notwithstanding the unusually large amount of work, the Law Department was conducted in 1912 at a saving, in salaries and expenses, of \$5,476.87, as compared with 1911.